

Information Organization, Usability, Currency & Accessibility (IOUCA)

Working Group

California Portal Steering Committee

Date: February 21, 2006

Time: 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Location: LC II, Room 340

Attendees:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neal Albritton (DOR)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Branson (DHS)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Clemons (CEAP)
<input type="checkbox"/> Mary Fernandez (SPB)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Donna Freeman (FTB)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theresa Giles (DHS)
<input type="checkbox"/> Daniel Gullahorn (SCIO)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Jewell (CSL)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patrick Johnson (DOR)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anamarie Malone (DTS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Liz Mechem (Insurance)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Claudina Nevis (SCIO)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kristine Ogilvie (CSL)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rob Quigley (SCIO)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deborah Schwartz (CRB)

Review Minutes from Previous Meeting

Debbie Schwartz

The team reviewed and approved the February 14, 2006 minutes with no changes.

Recommendation on FTB Template

Working Group

DOR was not able to review the template for accessibility as planned; they do not have the software needed to unzip files. They are working with their IT department to download the software and should be able to start the review on Thursday. Neal will conduct a preliminary review then assign to DOR staff for a more in depth review. The accessibility review should be completed by the March 7th meeting. Neal will have a preliminary update next Tuesday. Donna will speak to FTB's W3C expert to find out if he has already reviewed the site and identified areas that need improvement. DOR and FTB will communicate during the review process.

Anamarie was working last week on converting FTB's Dreamweaver template to Homesite; she encountered problems. FTB's site is reliant on graphics for design (including navigation tabs) and looks very different when the graphics are stripped. Departments will need to own graphics software and have the expertise to change the graphics to meet their department needs. DTS developed a Cascading Style Sheet (CSS) for one of the template pages that will make it easier to convert content. However, graphics are still required. There are techniques that allow text to go over graphics that then expand or contract based on word size. Donna will take the issue back to FTB's technical group and ask them to start working on alternatives.

ACTION: *FTB will develop alternatives for the template that will enable departments with little expertise and no graphical software to use the templates.*

Assigned To: *Donna Freeman*

Due: *Update on February 28, 2006*

ACTION: *Anamarie will ask the DTS CSS developer to convert the remainder of the FTB templates to CSS. Donna will check the availability of FTB's CSS developer and talk to Anamarie; we may want FTB and DTS to work together.*

Assigned To: *Anamarie Malone and Donna Freeman*

Due: *Update on February 28, 2006*

The usability review and vetting the new design procedure were not completed in time for the meeting; it will be posted on the working group website by February 22.

The working group noted that the FTB template uses a Google search box. How should we handle generic templates – should they display a Google search box, the state search box, or a stripped down search box? It was noted that unless a department contracts with Google for a fee,

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they have no control over when Google crawls their site. It was also noted that the Google search box on the FTB template is not accessible; it could be changed to make it accessible, but this goes against Google standards.

The following questions need to be answered:

1. Is there a way to have the California search engine focus on a department site?
2. How many departments are using Google search? How many of those departments have contracts with Google?
3. Should generic templates display a Google search box, the state search box, or a stripped down search box?

ACTION: *Claudina will speak with Clark and John to discuss setting up a meeting with Google to discuss search options and recommendations..*

Assigned To: *Claudina Nevis*

Due: *Update on February 28, 2006*

Purpose and Definition

Working Group

Neal provided the following purpose and definition for accessibility:

Purpose: To create Web pages that allow people with disabilities, many of whom are assistive technology users, the opportunity to achieve access to the same level that people without disabilities are accustomed to.

Definition: Accessibility is defined as the ability to acquire, use, and manipulate electronic information, transferred across the World Wide Web, that is not restricted or hindered by disability or the use of assistive technology.

After team discussion, it was agreed that the purpose should be revised to include all users (generic accessibility) and non-English speakers. General accessibility will address, among other things, older browsers and slow modems. It was noted that content is the critical piece that must be available to everyone; the presentation should be as similar as possible but the focus must be on the content. The definition may need to be broadened in the final sentence to include differences in technology. Another option is to keep the definition broad by not listing any specific accessibility issues such as assistive technology.

The purpose and definition for usability and findability were not completed prior to the meeting; they will be discussed next week.

Open Forum – Recommendations From Team

All

1. Is there a need to identify a working group to address style sheets? The team agreed that a working group consisting of technical representatives from DOR, SCIO, DHS, CEAP, DTS, and FTB could address the technical issues surrounding style sheets and report to the IOUCA working group for use in making policy recommendations.
2. Rob provided draft policy language addressing levels of accessibility department websites should achieve. The policy language provides a blueprint on how to meet the W3C web recommendations. It was noted that the language and the W3C references focus on XHTML; Rob and DOR will discuss whether HTML should be included as well. The policy sets accessibility standards at the desired level, rather than setting for the lowest

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common denominator. An exemption process will be provided for departments that are unable to meet the standards. It was noted that we need to determine what browser versions the California state website should support. XHTML and CSS won't give the same visual experience with an older browser such as Netscape 4.0. We will also need to determine how to address departments that lack the skills and knowledge to adopt XHTML and CSS. We need a fallback for departments to request an exemption through the State CIO's Office. We could also offer template choices in XHTML/CSS or table-based HTML. The technical working group addressing style sheets will identify options and the IOUCA will establish recommendations. There was some discussion regarding whether exemptions should be required or if IOUCA should rather provide guidelines to follow when upgrading. It was agreed that the intent is to move ahead and improve our websites; the exemption process may provide incentive for departments to upgrade their sites. We do need to keep in mind that it may not be reasonable or feasible for departments to comply immediately; the process should allow for transition.

3. It was noted that target.com is currently being sued for denial of civil rights because blind people are not able to use their website. We need to bear in mind the state's susceptibility to litigation.
4. At last weeks meeting, John mentioned Safari (<http://proquest.safaritechbooksonline.com>). Safari is an online collection of computer books with sections on usability. John provided a description of the service and instructions for access. If the website opens to a page titled "Califa Group", you are logged in. If you are prompted to enter a user name and password, please email John Jewell (jjewell@library.ca.gov); if you know your public IP address, please provide it. John reminded the group not to share access with other state workers at this time. The state contract is for a set number of users; if this number is exceeded, people will not be able to long on.

Open Action Items (Not Including Timeline)

Debbie Schwartz

ACTION: *FTB and DOR will meet to discuss the feasibility of including usability testing in DOR's accessibility study.*

Update: *Donna and Neal discussed the RFO. Donna is reviewing the RFO to determine if usability fits within the scope.*

Assigned To: *Donna Freeman and Neal Albritton*

Due: *February 28, 2006*

ACTION: *Develop a database where working group members can enter issues, problems, and challenges related to their areas of expertise. Coordinate with Donna Freeman to make the database available for entry and review on the working group website.*

Assigned To: *Debbie Schwartz*

Due: *February 28, 2006.*

ACTION: *Provide definitions for standards, guidelines, best practices, definition, and purpose.*

Assigned To: *Debbie Schwartz*

Due: *February 28, 2006.*

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Next Steps

Kris Ogilvie, Debbie Schwartz

Next IOUCA Meeting: February 28, 2006

Library & Courts II, 900 N Street, Room 340

9:00 – 11:00 a.m.